

"Bell Ringing 101"

December 07, 2003

Well what do you know! Your writer was the first official Salvation Army bell ringer in the town of Wellesley for this year's Christmas drive! Not only is it an annual honor for me to do this (my sixth time) but I also do it in memory of my mother who was an officer in the Salvation Army.

It's actually a lot of fun - this business of bell ringing. I go into our local supermarket (Roche Brothers) and get the stand, the kettle and the sign. After putting these three parts together, I stand by the entrance of the store and ring, ring; ring a bell that is attached to the stand by a little metal chain.

Where I stand is of course critical! I am able to position myself right near the front entrance so that any time someone goes in or out of that entrance; I get a nice blast of warm air coming from inside the super-market. But not only is it warm, it's also fragrant with the smell of cooking meats (BBQ chickens, ribs, whatever is baking in their famous take out kitchen). Since drooling is not appreciated, I try to eat something before I take my position! You sign up for hour slots and the time really goes by quickly. Even in the bitterest cold, your hour is over before you even realize it. Besides the countless "thank you's" and "Merry Christmas" and "God bless you's", you will always end up in several conversations about how the Salvation Army helped out a particular family member or relation.

Dressing is also important - having several layers is important as well as two pair of socks. You need to keep your head covered and wear mittens at all times.

Now why do I do this besides wanting to honor my Mom? It really comes right down to the words of Jesus in Matthew 25. By helping out the Salvation Army, I am doing my small part in "For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to see me."

The Salvation Army has ministries in every single one of those areas identified by Jesus ... the money that comes in through my bell ringing goes directly to those programs. So, the next time you pass one of those bell ringers ... think of me - in fact, it might be me in disguise. Over the years I have often manned the kettles in various disguises including being one of the magi! Put some money in - and help fulfill the commands of Jesus. To respond or subscribe, [click here](#).